Alberta Crop Report

Crop Conditions as of August 11, 2015

This past week, hot and dry weather has affected much of the southern part of the South Region, the northern Peace Region, and a large area extending along highway 16, between Lloydminster and Edson. Showers brought some much needed moisture to the southern Peace Region (upwards of 80 mm) and the northern part of the South Region (upward of 50 mm). Since middle of July, most of the Agricultural areas have return to normal rainfall accumulations, improving crop conditions on late seeded crops and helping them to fill. However, some areas still remain parched due to an exceptionally dry spring.

Harvest operations are beginning across the province. While swathing of some crops is underway in all regions, combining just started in some areas, particularly for dry peas. Approximately, five per cent of crops in the province have been swathed or combined (Table 1). Harvest is expected to be in full progress across the province within the next week.

Preliminary dryland yield estimates have improved for some crops compared to two weeks ago, however still could be about 25 - 30 per cent below average for most crops. For canola, the 2015 dryland yield is estimated at 29.6 bushels per acre, spring wheat 34.6 bushels per acre and barley 50.4 bushels per acre (Table 2).

With the help of hot and dry weather, crops are maturing quickly. Most spring cereal crops are at a dough development stage. About 29 to 38 per cent of spring wheat, barley, durum, lentils and dry peas are in good to excellent condition, while canola is at 26 per cent. Provincially, crop conditions improved by one per cent from a week ago due to the recent showers. Surface and sub-surface soil moisture ratings across the province remain extremely low through many areas and are rated 29 per cent and 27 per cent good to excellent, respectively (unchanged from a week ago).

First cut dryland hay is 96 per cent complete across the province. Preliminary average provincial yield on dryland is estimated at 0.8 ton per acre, down 0.9 ton from a year ago. Quality of the first cut is rated as 64 per cent good to excellent. Irrigated haying operations are virtually complete with yield reported at 2.4 tons per acre and quality rated as 84 per cent good to excellent. Second cut haying operations are underway, with 47 per cent of irrigated land complete and quality rated as 96 per cent good to excellent. Pasture and tame hay growth are rated 83 per cent and 84 per cent poor to fair, respectively.

Grasshoppers remain a significant problem in a few areas in the North East, North West and Peace Regions. Lygus bugs and root maggots are becoming an issue in the Peace Region.

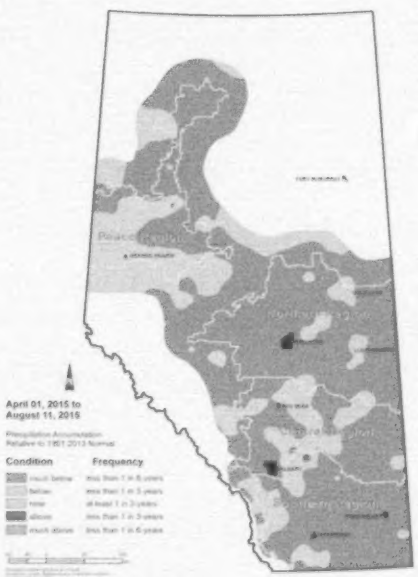
Table 1: Estimates of Regional Crop Harvest Progress, Alberta

	Per Cent Combined or Swathed					
	South	Central	NE	NW	Peace	**Alberta**
	As of August 11, 2015					
Spring Wheat	13.1%	0.4%	--	--	0.2%	**3.8%**
Durum	7.4%	0.8%	--	--	--	**6.5%**
Barley	24.1%	0.5%	--	0.4%	--	**7.6%**
Oats	19.4%	0.3%	--	--	--	**1.1%**
Winter Wheat	66.1%	15.8%	100.0%	--	--	**54.2%**
Fall Rye	85.0%	22.9%	100.0%	--	--	**46.9%**
Spring Triticale	10.0%	2.5%	--	--	--	**3.6%**
Mixed Grain	10.0%	0.4%	--	--	--	**1.3%**
Canola	8.6%	0.1%	--	--	1.5%	**1.8%**
Dry Peas	48.7%	7.3%	2.0%	0.4%	6.9%	**23.6%**
Lentils	35.0%	33.3%	--	--	--	**33.8%**
Chickpeas	27.5%	--	--	--	--	**25.9%**
Mustard	6.6%	--	--	--	--	**4.8%**
Alberta	**17.9%**	**0.8%**	**0.2%**	**0.1%**	**1.2%**	**5.3%**

Table 2: Estimates of Dryland Yield, Alberta

	bu/acre					
	South	Central	NE	NW	Peace	**Alberta**
	As of August 11, 2015					
Spring Wheat	33.5	34.9	35.6	39.7	30.5	**34.6**
Durum	35.0	28.2	--	--	--	**34.0**
Barley	50.7	52.2	49.4	45.3	51.6	**50.4**
Oats	54.8	58.7	55.6	60.4	62.5	**58.8**
Canola	28.5	32.1	31.3	30.9	24.5	**29.6**
Dry Peas	30.8	32.2	32.2	31.2	34.3	**31.8**

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Forestry



Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program.

The precipitation map is compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Environmental Stewardship Division, Technology and Innovation Branch.

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REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2015 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- Hot, dry weather covered the southern part for the region allowing crops to progress toward maturity, however under significant heat stress. Spotty hail storms were reported in some parts of the region with more frequent showers in the northern part of the region, which helped to advance crop development with spring wheat, barley and oats entering ripening stage.
- Harvesting of most crops is underway with eight per cent in the bin. About 46 per cent of dry peas, and winter wheat has been combined. Swathing is underway at 14 per cent done for barley, nine per cent for canola and 10 per cent for spring wheat.
- First cut haying operations for both dryland and irrigated land are virtually done, with 82 per cent and 86 per cent rated as good to excellent quality, respectively. Preliminary average yield on dryland is estimated at 1.0 ton per acre and 2.4 tons per acre on irrigated. Second cut haying operations are underway, with 52 per cent of irrigated land complete. Pasture conditions are unchanged from a week ago and are now reported as 85 per cent poor to fair, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- The combination of hot weather and wide spread shower activity was reported throughout the region. Crop development continues to advance well. Spring wheat and barley are in a soft dough development stage, while oats are in a late milk stage.
- Combining and swathing of dry peas, lentils, winter wheat and fall rye has just started and is reported less than one per cent complete. Crops are maturing quickly in much of the region and general harvest will soon be underway.
- First cut haying operations are 94 per cent complete on dryland and virtually done on irrigated land. Average yield on dryland is estimated at 0.7 ton per acre, while irrigated is 2.2 tons per acre. Quality is rated as 53 per cent good to excellent for dryland hay and 60 per cent for irrigated. Pasture conditions are reported as 81 per cent poor to fair, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- Hot weather and isolated showers during the past week helped to advance crop development. Barley and oats are in an early dough development stage, while spring wheat is in a hard dough stage.
- Combining and swathing of dry peas is underway with two per cent complete, while all winter wheat and fall rye are in the bin. Crops are maturing quickly in much of the region and general harvest will soon be underway.
- First cut haying operations are 94 per cent complete on dryland. Average yield is estimated at 0.6 ton per acre. Quality is rated 57 per cent good to excellent. Pasture conditions are reported as 79 per cent poor to fair, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- Spotty showers were most welcomed in some areas over the past week, while other areas experienced dry and hot weather. Crop development continues to advance well. . Barley and oats are in a soft dough development stage, while spring wheat is in a hard dough stage.
- Combining and swathing of dry peas have just started and is less than one per cent complete. Harvest is expected to be in full progress across the region within the next week.
- First cut haying operations are nearly finished with 97 per cent of dryland complete. Average yield is estimated at 0.7 ton per acre, with quality rated 78 per cent good to excellent. Pasture conditions are reported as 93 per cent poor to fair, with the same ratings reported for tame hay.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- The combination of hot weather and heavy rain advanced crop development across the region. Barley and oats are in an early dough development stage, while spring wheat is in a soft dough stage.
- Combining of dry peas is underway with six per cent complete. Swathing of canola has just started and is reported two per cent compete.
- First cut haying operations are nearly finished with 96 per cent of dryland complete. Average yield is estimated at 1.0 ton per acre. Quality is rated 61 per cent good to excellent. Pasture conditions are reported as 83 per cent poor to fair, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

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August 14, 2015

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